

REMARKS

ON

THE CHARACTER AND NARRATIVE

OF THE

REV. JOHN CLARK,

BY

WILLIAM JAY.

INTERSPERSED WITH

BRIEF SKETCHES FROM THE NARRATIVE,

BY WAY OF ILLUSTRATION,

BY ANOTHER HAND.

The profits of this work will be appropriated to the use of the Missionary Society.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY CUMMINGS AND HILLIARD.

Univ. Press—Hilliard & Metcalf.

1821.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the third day of February, A. D. 1821, and in the forty fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Cummings & Hilliard, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, viz.

“Remarks on the character and narrative of the Rev. John Clark, by William Jay. Interspersed with brief sketches from the narrative, by way of illustration, by another hand.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” and also to an act, entitled, “An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,
Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

ADVERTISEMENT.

SOME may think it a *small* thing, and it is a *very small* thing, to offer the profits of 3000 copies of this work to the Missionary Society; but it may induce some to purchase it, and we shall give the profit to show, in our feeble way, that we have heard that Society's *loud appeal* to the public, for *more* funds. They *must* have more funds to prosecute their extensive plans of benevolence to the world! We are convinced too, that, although the amount be trifling, yet if every Christian would *do what he can*, the requisite sum would soon be furnished. We are strengthened in this belief, from an interesting fact, mentioned by a respectable minister at a meeting of the Bible Society in England, in the year 1817; which was this, that the *Penny Societies* of that country had already paid into the treasury of the parent institution *more than the whole amount* of monies received from all the subscriptions to that noble Society.



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RECOMMENDATION OF THE WORK.

HAVING perused the Rev. Mr. Jay's remarks on the life of Rev. John Clark, we are of the opinion, that the republication of them in this country will be useful to the cause of piety; and we are gratified with the proposal to republish them. We consider them as adapted, in a high degree, to communicate important christian instruction. The vivacity and perspicuity of this author have justly entitled him to a respectable place among the religious writers of the present day; and in respect to soundness and sobriety of judgment, on practical points of religion, we are persuaded that the work above mentioned may justly claim a higher rank, than any of the former publications

of Mr. Jay. We most cheerfully recommend the book to the attentive perusal of every person, who is a solicitous inquirer respecting the true nature of experimental piety.

E. PORTER.
M STUART.
L. WOODS.

Andover Theol. Sem. }
14 Dec. 1820. }

TO THE READER.

THE following Remarks, by the Rev. Mr. Jay, upon the life of the Rev. Mr. Clark, are so judicious, exhibit such a knowledge of human nature, and afford so many valuable hints, particularly useful to those, who are entering upon the sacred office of the ministry, and have so many striking turns of thought, characteristic of their worthy author, that it has been thought advisable to publish them by themselves, in a small volume, separate from the Narrative, to which they were originally subjoined. A leading design in this is, to render them accessible to many, whose means would not allow them to possess the larger work, or who might feel unwilling to go to the expense of it.

Meanwhile to supply the want of the Narrative, and to illustrate some of the remarks, it has been

thought fit to insert, within brackets, a few brief sketches, drawn from the Narrative, and so introduced, as not to interrupt the thread of discourse. The sketches are very brief, for the obvious reason of confining the volume to a small size.

Thus prepared, the Remarks are offered to the American public with the fervent wishes of the Editor, that they may be widely diffused, and may correct and elevate the tone of public, religious ministrations in this rising and highly favoured nation.

1821.

REMARKS

ON

THE CHARACTER AND NARRATIVE

OF THE

REV. JOHN CLARK,

OF TROWBRIDGE, COUNTY OF WILTS, ENGLAND.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM JAY,

OF BATH.

[THE subject of the Memoirs, upon which these remarks are offered, was born at *Frome-Selwood*, county of *Somerset*, on the 13th of Jan. O. S. (Jan. 24,) 1745, of respectable parents of the established Church, who gave him an education rather beyond their station in life, and beyond what they gave to any other of their children. From his narrative it appears that before his death his] health had been for some years impaired and declining. At length the symptoms of his disorder grew more serious; and his friends foreboded the event as at no great distance. But his removal was rather sudden and unexpected. In the morning of the last sabbath he spent on earth, he attended public worship. In the evening of the day on which he died, a friend called upon him, and remarked his cheerfulness and composure: he replied, "I enjoy a solid peace, and have not been suffered to doubt the safety of my state

during all this affliction, and for years before." He performed family worship himself—it was the last time—he prayed with peculiar impressiveness, like one who was at "the gate of heaven." Then taking leave of his friend, he said, "Perhaps we may not meet again on earth, but I trust we shall meet in heaven. I might have died long ago. I may not die for some weeks. I may die this very night. But, blessed be God, let it come when it will, all is well with regard to the soul and eternity." He retired; and, when in bed, again expressed his sense of the divine goodness, that "all, all was well." Shortly after which he literally and figuratively "fell asleep," [aged about 64] Nothing could have been more easy or tranquil than his entrance into the "rest that remains for the people of God."

Thus from the termination of his written account to the period of his dissolution, only a few months intervened; and they were months of inability for public service, and of bodily sickness and pain. During this season nothing occurred worthy of remark, but the exemplary manner in which he bore his privations and afflictions; and the familiarity and satisfaction with which he looked forward to the hour of his release. His experience and conversation in circumstances so trying, and in prospect of an event so awful and important, were peculiarly interesting and edifying.

I never withdrew from his presence without exclaiming, "Thus, if called to it, may I suffer." "Let me die the death of the righteous; and let my last end be like his."

In our monthly religious obituaries there is too great an insertion of at least *one* kind of peaceful and happy deaths. I mean those deaths—*with* which the life has no correspondence—*for* which it is no preparation—and *of* which it yields no reasonable hope. The scripture does not countenance the expectation of such a frequent discordancy between the way and the end; between the character of a man while in this world, and his transition out of it. And though we should always endeavour to do good, and never limit the Holy One of Israel, it becomes us in many instances to rejoice, not only with trembling, but with silence; and to remember that the evidences which encourage us, must be from the very nature of the case dubious; that "light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart;" that we are to "fight the good fight of faith," in order to "lay hold on eternal life," and to "run the race set before us," in order to "reach the prize of our high calling;" and that the frequent exhibition of careless, worldly, wicked lives being closed with a work of grace, will have a tendency to prevent a salutary fear, and to keep alive a presumptuous hope. God forbid we should exclude,

however vile, any of our fellow-creatures from mercy, even at the eleventh hour. We do not. But it may strike some with wonder to observe how commonly—may I not add invariably, even malefactors, when visited by a certain order of good men, finish their course, if not with the triumph and extacy of martyrs, yet with a confidence and joy far superior to those of thousands who have long followed the Saviour in the regeneration. Now admitting, as we most cheerfully and gratefully do, the possibility of a real change of heart in some of these examples, yet surely it would not be amiss if many of those who profess to experience it, discovered a little more penitence, as well as assurance; and many of those who record it displayed a little more caution as well as zeal.

To return to the place from which we may seem to have digressed; in Mr. Clark the way and the end, the life and the death harmonized. To live was Christ: to die was gain. He had been distinguished by a long course of dependence upon God, of communion with him, of devotedness to him. He evinced a remarkable steadiness and consistency of character. He was early called to a knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus. [He first received the sacrament when about 18 years of age; having been previously awakened, and probably renewed in heart, under the ministry of

Mr. Thomas Jones, of St. Savior's, Southwark ;] and from the commencement of his religious career to the close of it he was uniform. Observed at twenty, at forty, at sixty ; seen in public, in private, in single life ; examined as a son, a master, a husband, a father—he was the same ; harmless and blameless ; holy and spiritual—no other difference being discernible than that which results from increase and progression. For “the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

What an interesting object to contemplate is a man who not only begins well, but ends so ; who, moving through a world like this for near seventy years, is steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; who is neither discouraged by difficulties, nor flattered by seducing prospects to abandon his course, or even to relax in it ! How many apostacies and declensions has such a man witnessed while he has held on his way ! How often have his principles been reduced to proof, and how often has he practically said, “Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord !” Such a man gains esteem and confidence : his enemies and his friends are possessed of a thousand pledges of the part he will act in any given circumstances : he is a tower-man, he has passed the mint, and circulates unques-

tioned and approved : he is “blessed,” for “he is tried, and receives a crown of life”—and the Judge of all, as he puts it on, says, “Thou hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.” Such a man is here presented to the public.

A prejudice has sometimes been excited against early conversions ; but an enemy has done this. Surely it is reasonable to conclude, that where God intends a man should gain much or do much, he will dispose him to begin betimes. Surely it is not without cause that he has said, “I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me.” And the eminent servants of God recorded in the scriptures, and the numberless examples that have adorned the church of God down to a Winter, and a Clark, will, I hope, be sufficient to disprove the wretched proverb, that “young saints make old devils,” and give rise to a juster one, “that young saints make old angels.”

While we acknowledge the insufficiency of a dry and barren orthodoxy ; of cold and speculative opinions, that leave the heart unimpressed and the life unsanctified ; no opportunity should be omitted of remarking the importance that ought to be attached to an enlightened understanding and a sound judgment. And it would not be difficult to prove, how materially the adoption of definite

and fixed views of the doctrines of the gospel affects, if not the safety, yet the excellency of the individual. Decision and firmness, even when they rather partake of obstinacy, connect much more advantageously with dignity and usefulness, than levity, and fickleness, and change. That which is firm may be rendered fundamental; but who can build on sliding sand? A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. He can never be a character. Character is the result and fame of habits; habits are formed by actions; and actions, that are uniform and constant enough to produce them, must issue from some strong principle—the man cannot be versatile in the bias of his feelings, or of his views. The firm reception of, and adherence to, a class of sentiments, even allowing the system not to be perfectly correct, (a concession that ought to be extended to every system, but that which is contained in the Book of God,) is preferable to a state of hesitation and uncertainty. For this state of mind, though it may in some cases be excused, and in some, for awhile, be even commended, generally springs from evil, and leads to it. It reflects on revelation, which being designed not only for important but immediate use, is doubtless intended to be plain. It discredits the truth of the promise—“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”—“The meek will be guide in judgment, and the meek will be

teach his way." It causes us to lose the advantage of truth under the constant apprehension of admitting error; keeps every thing unoperative, because undecided; and employs in search, the opportunities given for use and employment. I can never suppose, that the scripture designed to applaud the free inquiry and liberal minds of those who are represented as "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Men the most distinguished and serviceable in the cause of God have been the reverse of this vagrancy of mind; they had their leading sentiments early and firmly fixed; their "hearts were established with grace;" and though they improved much, they varied little. And this was the case with the man of God we are reviewing. He never found it necessary to change those principles which he felt perfectly adapted to his state as a sinner, and his experience as a saint. He discerned and embraced the truth at once, and without delay began to enjoy it—to walk in it—to profess it—to diffuse it: and hence the complexion of his future life.

I am far from wishing to represent Mr. Clark as perfect. We have no such characters in the biography of the scripture; and when we meet with them in other works, we feel ourselves trifled with, if not insulted. We have fable given us, instead of fact. Such characters are imaginary.

Even the grace of God, while it produces the christian, leaves the man. I should not furnish a just view of the subject of this narrative, were I not to observe, that he had a disposition, which, to an unusual degree, was retreating and reserved. To this may be fairly ascribed several of the little blemishes occasionally noticed in him. We are prone to run into extremes. The generality of ministers, as well as of females in our day, are not in danger of excess in "being keepers at home:" but in the case of the deceased, home was, perhaps, too attractive and engrossing. He seemed to draw solitarily, rather than as a co-operator with others. He rarely met with his brethren in their associations, or attended any of their public services. He too rarely saw his own people, but in the house of God, and in the hour of affliction; he had too little intercourse with his neighbours and friends; he stood too much aloof from general society.

Here it may be necessary to observe, that while religion disposes us for retirement, it prepares us to leave it; and that many of its duties call us, not out of the world, but into it. A christian, says our Lord, is a candle; and "no man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house." And adds he—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

Heaven.” Ye are my witnesses, says God. As such, they are subpœnaed to *appear*; and they are not to be absent when called upon to depose. Many a testimony has been lost by the christian’s withdrawment from his place, as well as by his cowardly fear and shame when he is in it.

It is possible, therefore, that the abstraction enjoined upon us in the scriptures, may lead us astray; and there is peculiar danger of this, when it falls in with a recluse temper. It is very conceivable, that many find solitude much more inviting, and free, and pleasant, than society. Moses, doubtless, found it a greater privilege to hold communion with God in Horeb; but it was his duty to descend, and endeavour to guide and govern a faithless and perverse generation, through the wilderness to Canaan. Peter wished to remain in the transfiguration with his Master, and Moses and Elias—but “he knew not what he said.” From the irreligious maxims and manners of the world, we are absolutely to retire, and thus practically bear our testimony against them: but the demand does not extend in the same way to our social intercourse with themselves. This it indirectly and conditionally forbids. This we are only to avoid when there is danger of infection, and no prospect of doing good. And even with regard to these, we are to remember—that we may be secured from contagion, if we take our

preservatives along with us, and venture only at the call of God, and with a single eye to our duty : and—that there are opportunities and ways of being serviceable by a well regulated intermixture with others, that some cannot or will not discern. We should, therefore, guard not only against every thing that looks uncivil, but unsocial in religion. Though we are to discover a peculiar regard to “the household of faith ;” “as we have opportunity, we are to do good unto all men.” They have claims upon us as fellow-creatures, citizens, neighbours. The Saviour died for them ; and it is not the will of our Father, who is in Heaven, that one of them should perish. If we are in the possession of a benefit that at present they are unhappily destitute of ; are we to be proud, as well as thankful ? Are we to feel, and act as if we considered them excluded and reprobate ? Or as those, who are encouraged by the mercy bestowed on themselves, to invite others from their own experience, and to say—“O taste and see that the Lord is good—blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”

By keeping at an ungracious distance from those around us, we seem at least to regard them as the Jews did the Gentiles, unworthy to come in contact with so peculiar a people : we seem to say, “Stand by thyself ; come not near to me ; for I am holier than thou.” Hence, as they will judge

by us of our religion—our religion will acquire, in their minds, a contemptuous and repulsive aspect, and the re-action of such a sentiment cannot but be injurious and lamentable.

Nor is this all. A man may move sufficiently in a state of society, and yet prevent all the usefulness of which he might render himself capable. It is only for him to imitate some of those beautiful and amiable examples with which the professing world in too many districts abounds. Let him only display the arrogance of spiritual pride; the censoriousness of superior orthodoxy; the captiousness of theological controversy; the rudeness and rancour of malevolence called faithfulness; the self-conceit, and positiveness, and intolerance, and insolence of those who *see things clearly*; the evangelical pharisaism, if I may be allowed a perversion of language, of those “who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others;” and the work is effectually done. Who would ever wish to be religious with such specimens of religion before his eyes? Who would not deprecate the conversion of sinners, if they were to be converted by such saints as these? [Mr. Clark in his memoirs observes of himself and his Church, “we had no objection to any denomination of christians partaking with us, who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; for we determined from the beginning to avoid all bigotry, and zeal for a party.”]

It is to be lamented that many, who are in a great measure free from these incurable evils, do not attend sufficiently to the apostolical maxim, "Walk in wisdom towards them that are without." But some few there are who, along with inflexible integrity, possess the secret of moral attraction. They discover such a sympathy in their afflictions, such a concern for their welfare, such a readiness to serve them, as seldom fails to impress and interest those who neither think, nor worship with them. They not only differ, but even censure, without producing resentment or alienation. They can drop hints so gentle and well-timed as not to disgust; so derived from circumstances and events as to appear natural and undesigned; so judicious in their application as to exemplify the proverb, "A word fitly spoken, O how good is it; it is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." They study the educations, connexions, habits, prejudices and temperament of the individuals with whom they have to do. They shun every tendency to angry dispute, while they are "always ready to give to every man that asketh, a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear." They know that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" and therefore in meekness "instruct those that oppose themselves."—They do not press what their connexions at present are not prepared to

receive ; but endeavour to improve what is admitted and acknowledged, and which in due time will make way for more. Instead of assailing every thing that is wrong, they commend and cherish every thing that is right. They expel evil by introducing good ; and banish error by presenting truth : and thus the friend acts without assuming an opposition that may render him in appearance a foe. They tear not the votaries of the world from their pursuits by violence, while their hearts would mourn after the interdicted delights ; but they wean and allure from dissipation by substituting other engagements, and pleasures more rational and satisfying ; and are therefore careful to exhibit “whatsoever things are lovely and of good report ;” and to render religion as desirable as it is necessary ; as “having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.”

Such conduct is not the sacrifice of principle, but the judicious use of it. It is prudence, considering the quality of its materials, as well as its work ; varying its means to compass its end ; conceding to gain, and yielding to conquer. It is not the cowardice, but “the meekness of wisdom.” And though this wisdom is never perceived in its operation and seldom acknowledged even in its useful result, by blind and furious bigots, “it is justified of all her children.” Was there ever a more

steadfast friend to truth than Paul? Instead of betraying the cause he espoused, he nobly fell a martyr to it. But what says he? "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew; that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." "Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

It may be necessary to touch another article of some importance in the christian life. Habits of frugality may easily pass the line of duty and enter the province of the neighbouring vice. People are often in hazard from this quarter, without apprehending it. Their religion teaches them to regard moderation as a virtue; and their circumstances perhaps require the practice of rigid economy even to "provide things honest in the sight of all men." What was originally necessary, continues when it is no longer indispensable. They who have felt the worth of property by the want

of it, are apt to remember the worth when it is no longer wanted: and as they advance, not only shun extravagance, but that becomingly enlarged and liberal mode of livelihood which will not suffer "their good to be evil spoken of." For if a christian, especially one of the stricter class, denies himself many things which his condition allows, he must be largely generous and beneficent, or his profession suffers: his privations will be considered the offspring of niggardliness, or sacrifices to Mammon.

But as habits of frugality and economy may very possibly be perverted and misrepresented; so the degree of beneficence practised by many of our fellow-christians cannot be easily ascertained. When, with regard to bounty, we consider how much *ought* to be, and how much *may* be private; how many cases of distress come under the notice of another, that never strike our own; how diversified the views of charity are, as well as its objects, and that those who do not walk with us may do good in their own way; it becomes us, in this as well as in many other instances, to remember the admonition, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

It has been supposed, even by friendship, that if Mr. Clark required the exercise of candour any where, it would be here. How far it is needful I cannot determine. From personal observation I

was never impressed with the deficiency. But I can suppose, that his abstracted life cut him off from many objects, which by striking the eye would have affected the heart; and that the full employment of himself in a large business, in literary pursuits, and constant preaching, left him little leisure and opportunity to explore affliction in person. I can imagine, though I do not wish to justify the effect, that having constantly had so many of the lower class manufacturing for him, he might have *had* blunted, by all the wickedness he witnessed, something of the fine edge of humanity that many of those feel, whose intercourse with the poor and wretched is only occasional and charitable. I know, that so conscious was he of the important duty of liberality, that he enjoined his dearest friend, if she judged it proper, to extend relief on any application, even should he himself at the time seem to be disinclined or adverse to it. He was not only the tender, but the kind relative; and amply proved himself "a friend to the fatherless." He even purchased the place of worship, in which he so long employed himself, and of private property made it public, by putting it into the hand of trustees; and also secured provision for a considerable endowment in aid of the future support of divine worship there. The sums expended for this purpose alone were more than one thousand pounds. When it became necessary to

have an assistant and a successor that would require a salary, he set his people an example by a very handsome annual subscription. The profits that might arise from any of his publications, he previously consecrated to benevolent purposes. He bequeathed considerable legacies to the Bible, the Missionary, the Hibernian, and Tract Societies. And what was his whole life? Was it not completely disinterested? "They that sow spiritual things should reap carnal things:" "and the labourer is worthy of his hire."* It is an ordinance of God, as truly as baptism or the Lord's supper; "even so hath God *ordained* that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel." But, like Paul, our friend always waved his privilege; not only in the infancy of the church, but when they were able to remunerate his services: and for all his labours he never received one mite. He could say without a fear of contradiction, "I seek not yours but you. I have coveted no man's silver or gold, or apparel; yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." Many may be equally disinterested

* Mr. Clark somewhere strikingly says,

Must not, you'll say, a preacher then have bread;
And feeding others, not himself be fed?

—"Tis true: but here a difference we conceive—
Some live by preaching, and some preach to live.

and unsecular in the sight of God, who cannot appear so in the view of men: but it is a singular advantage when the proof can accompany and illustrate the principle.—What could have carried a man forward, not only without repentance, but with delight, in so many ways, and for so many years, without the prospect or the wish of any emolument—yea, at the expense of substance, ease, friendship, fame? What was it that led him to subordinate worldly business and the pursuits of science to his public work? What led him to resign the figure he might have made as the gentleman and the scholar, for the sake of preaching in places and circumstances the most revolting to human pride, at the risk of health and life? [In the spring of 1771, Mr. Clark, pitying the ignorance of the people at West Lavington, proposed to preach to them on Whit-Tuesday. A vast concourse of people assembled; he began the service, and it went on for sometime without interruption; but when he named his text, “Repent and believe the gospel,” the rabble so distracted and disturbed the congregation, that he found it impossible to proceed.]

To those who were ignorant of the nature and force of the principle that actuated him, his conduct doubtless appeared mysterious or insane. But neither their ignorance, nor their reproach, could make him swerve, or pause. He could not

but speak the things that he had heard and seen. He was a wonder unto many: but he did not view them with contempt. He pitied them; he prayed for them. And though he did not think it necessary to apologize, he explained, in language canonized by one who had a larger share of the same spirit: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

There are few, especially among the moderns, who will bear any comparison with the deceased in point of *activity*. In labours he was more abundant. He was in season, and out of season. He knew that souls were perishing for lack of knowledge, and that his opportunities of saving them from death were limited and uncertain. He spent "the day"—it is called no more;—not in idleness, or wavering resolves, but in exertion; for he saw "the night coming wherein no man can work." Is it possible for a preacher to read his narrative? Is it possible for him to reflect how often he engaged in public and in private? In how many places he proclaimed the word of life? The quantity of fresh ground he broke up

—and all this under the engagements and perplexities he felt from secular concerns—and not be ashamed or—inflamed by it?

His labours were distinguished by their *usefulness*, as well as by their greatness. His preaching laid the foundation of many religious societies in the surrounding neighbourhood. But to Trowbridge we principally look for evidence that he did not “run in vain, nor labour in vain.” Beginning with three or four individuals in a private room, we behold him at length at the head of a congregation of considerable more than a thousand people on the Lord’s day, eager to hear the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. What a number of converts will be his joy and crown “in the day of the Lord Jesus.” What a number of souls encompassed the mouth of his grave, and by their tears acknowledged—“There lies the man that turned my feet into the path of peace.” “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.” [Nov. 15, 1767, in the town of Trowbridge, the place of his residence, Mr. Clark and eight others, five men and three women, after solemn prayer, made profession of their faith, and entered into a mutual covenant, to walk in fellowship together, and to watch over each other for their mutual good. Nov. 20, 1771, they opened their new place of worship, forty feet long and thirty wide, and called it *The*

Tabernacle. Dec. 12, 1779, Mr. Clark writes, "Our number is now upwards of a hundred communicants, and great love and zeal at present reign among us."]

Other ministers have gone to churches already formed and established, but he had to form and establish one. Some plant, and others water, but he planted and watered, though it was God that gave the increase. Some lay the foundation, and others rear the building, but he laid the foundation, and with united patience and zeal, from time to time, added, "the lively stones that grew unto an holy temple in the Lord." It could not be said to him—"other men have laboured, and ye have entered into their labours." He did not move "in another man's line of things, made ready to his hand :—" but he could say—"I have strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation ; but as it is written, To whom he was not spoken, they shall see ; and they that have not heard shall understand."—Thus he practised himself, what in a poem he has recommended to another :—

Be you no party-man ; but strive to bring
New subjects daily to your heavenly King.
 —A gospel preacher should be apt to teach,
 And where the gospel is *not* preach'd—to preach.

Mr. Clark was a man by no means deficient in *literature*. He had been early placed at a good grammar school, where he made proficiency in the Latin. He became also familiar with Greek and Hebrew. He had a very strong attachment to the arts and sciences through life. Mechanics, astronomy, electricity, chemistry, music—these were his delight, and employed the moments he could save from his secular and sacred engagements. In music he was a good performer on several instruments. He was also a composer; and published a volume of tunes, which were revised by a very skilful hand. He had a soul formed for melody. Besides an organ in the Tabernacle, he had two in his own mansion—one in a large staircase, surrounded with a gallery, prepared to receive it; and one in another apartment, which was entirely of his own construction, as well as a spinnet, and a violoncello. Many curious and useful works remain as proofs of his delight and ingenuity in mechanism. I cannot imagine that I am sinking a biographical sketch, in mentioning things like these, especially in *such* an example. Knowledge of every kind is ornamental and valuable. The skill of Bezaleel is noticed by God himself as one of his own gifts: “I have filled him with my spirit in wisdom and in understanding, and in all manner of workmanship: to devise cunning works; to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and

in cutting of stones, to set, and in carving of timber.”—It may be proved from the case of Mr. Clark, that evangelical and serious religion is not, as some suppose, necessarily combined with rudeness, and dulness. He was not a gospel savage. In his dwelling, in his gardens, in his walks; taste and elegance were seen leading along piety, who instead of churlishly refusing their offer, accepted it with a smile, and walked hand in hand with them. You were cheerful without being vain; and serious without being sad: you were instructed and improved, while you were attracted and charmed. On a large sun dial, another work of his own hands, you saw *Pro tempore tantum*. On the front of one of his own made instruments, you read *Manu, Ore, Corde*. On an apparatus which he formed to exhibit the revolutions of the celestial bodies, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work.” And here I cannot omit a circumstance which is characteristic of the man, and serves to shew how knowledge may be rendered useful, even in a way of charity. In the time of the scarcity of corn, in addition to what he gave himself, he devised this kind of orrery, and lectured at the tabernacle on astronomy: and obtained, by tickets of admission of half-a-crown each, a considerable sum to distribute among the poor.

None that knew him will deny that he was a man of *great ingenuity*, and endowed with *superior talents*. This, I allow, is not easily inferred from his own memoir. In writings of this kind, there is an established mode, from which it would seem there is to be no deviation. Even those who are capable of improving it, are restrained by custom, or some unaccountable principle; so that the degree of genius they possess, instead of actuating their piety, is chilled and checked by it. Hence all religious journals are precisely alike. They tell something, but omit that which we are most anxious to know. We see indeed the goodness of the man, but not the individuality. We view the mind, but it is through a strait and contracted passage, like the pendulum of a clock through a circle of glass, in the body of the frame: we see it is going, but all the motion we observe is vacillation. We have repetitions of the same feelings, and the same phrases. A work of this class might be rendered, by a man of talent and remark, as well as devotion, a very interesting, a very instructive, and a very useful publication. Mr. Clark had made one improvement. He did not keep a *diary*, but wrote a *weekly* retrospect; and did it in the silence and sacredness of the sabbath-day morning. But it must be confessed this is all; and I have witnessed more intellect from him in one hour's conversation, or in one of his free

addresses from the pulpit, than I found in going over all these papers. He had a fine imagination, that seldom failed to furnish him with the most happy allusions and illustrations. He was able to simplify and bring down to popular apprehension almost any train of thought. He had a facility in varying a few well known truths, so as to give to sameness the effect of novelty. He could derive materials for his public discourses from the most common objects and occurrences. He studied men and things rather than pored over books; hence in his sermons there was the freshness of nature rather than the mechanism of art: and thus while engaged in business, he was not only able to preach, but to attract and keep large and constantly increasing audiences. Though he never thought of studying oratory, his address was easy, and fluent, and correct; and though his discourses were not modelled after the forms of the schools, they were so affectionate and experimental as always to excite interest and attention: and they who heard, could not but listen to addresses, which they knew sprang only from a concern for their welfare, and which, instead of flourishing in abstract theory, and general declamation, touched *their* case, and expressed *their* pains and pleasures, hopes and fears: addresses which were always adapted to break a whole heart, or to bind up a broken one.

To conclude: He was an *original* character. There was a class to which he belonged, but he was unique in it. He associated attributes rarely found blended in the same individual. It would be easy to exemplify this assertion.

—Here was a man full of diffidence and reserve, yet distinguished by active exertion; shrinking from private company, as much as Cowper, and yet apprehensive of no difficulty or danger in his public work, and seeking after opportunities to make known the savour of the Redeemer's knowledge in every place.

—A pastor, yet in trade; a minister of uncommon zeal, yet attentive to business, and acquiring affluence.

—A preacher, fixing upon his subjects in the place of worship, and deriving them from the chapters he read, yet never obliged to leave off or to talk nonsense by going on; always extemporaneous, yet never without order; and generally seizing a method as natural as it was prompt.

—Connected originally with no denomination, and shunned by the rigid of all parties; yet at length gaining the good-will and warm approbation of every neighbouring minister and congregation; and departing under their blessing and regret.

—Preaching out of the church, and giving rise to dissenting congregations; and yet attached to the establishment, not only at first, but to the end

of life,—and not only as to its doctrine, but its liturgy and forms. [1773. “Hitherto,” says Mr. Clark, “we had gone on in perfect harmony in points of doctrine. For as we were originally of the Church of England, we all firmly held the tenets of it, usually called Calvinistic, as expressed in her public prayers, and the thirty nine articles.” But about this time they were distressed with arminian principles, introduced by means of some of Mr. Wesley’s people.]

—Principally labouring among the poor and common people; often preaching without doors in the streets and hedges, and passing with many for a fanatic; yet a man of substance, countenanced by persons of eminent character and reputation in their day,* fond of elegant learning, pursuing philosophical experiments, passing his leisure hours in leading forward his son in every branch of knowledge:—his study exhibiting scarcely a religious publication, and only containing works of literature and scientific apparatus.

Who can help seeing, therefore, how prone we

* To mention no more: The late celebrated Dr. Stonehouse, as appears from the Memoir, more than countenanced him when he preached without doors in the vicinity of his living. And the Rev. James Roquett, of lamented memory, curate of St. Werburgh’s, lecturer of St Nicholas’ churches, and chaplain of St. Peter’s Hospital, Bristol; also chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl Deloraine; opened his chapel, and preached several years on the anniversary of the day.

are to err in judging of men by outward appearance, by common circumstances, by the class in which they usually rank. From every general rule there are exceptions. In every community there are characters that must not be measured by the ordinary standard. Indiscriminate reflections are always foolish and unjust. Many, whose ignorant and illiberal minds are now asking, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" would be astonished if by accident they were to associate for a time with individuals of the bodies they censure in the mass; and if they could know them personally before they were informed of their canton or their clan, they would value them, they would be attracted towards them, and find a thousand points of amiable and useful contact, where they would otherwise suppose there could be nothing but dissimilarity and mutual repulsion. What pleasure and advantage are often lost in neighbourhoods by the prevalence of prejudice, that keeps wise and worthy men at such a distance as to prevent their appreciating and loving one another. Surely if certain distinctions are deemed necessary in the present state, and restrict professional exertions; they need not forbid personal esteem and intercourse.

And to take a higher view.—As the subjects of divine grace, under all the denominations that distinguish us, we belong to one family; and are,

therefore, much more intimately related, than the votaries of any party can be united. If I am a real christian, whether an episcopalian, a dissenter, or a methodist, I am your brother in the highest sense God himself can affix to the term : hence you are not at liberty to determine how you shall feel and behave towards me : you are bound to love me ; and without this love, your religion is a dream. “ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.” “ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” Are we advancing to a world, where, it will not be enquired by what name we were called, but whether we “ walked in newness of life :” not whether we served God in a particular place, but worshipped him who is a spirit in spirit and in truth ? Should we not endeavour to rise, and approximate this state ? Must not a preparation for it consist in a resemblance of it ? Should we lay more stress on that which is ready to vanish away, than on that which is destined to be eternal, and is therefore infinitely superior in importance ?

If God has promised unity among his own followers, we have reason to believe that it has been accomplished. But we see men equally led by the spirit of God, and devoted to his will, differing from each other on numberless subjects. So it always has been. And so it always will be. Re-

ligion is not injured by it: nor has the scripture spoken in vain. It never intended any thing more than unity with variety; an accordance in great things, and difference in little ones. If communities or individuals pursue an uniformity of opinions, ceremonies, discipline, forms and modes of worship, they are first seeking that which is *impossible*; for the attempt has been fairly made, and has proved useless; men may as well be constrained or persuaded into an uniformity of stature—of complexion—of temper. And secondly, they are seeking after that which would be *unprofitable*. The advantage lies in the present state of things. The cultivation of such dispositions, and the practice of such duties, as the exercise of humility, forbearance, self-denial, candour, and brotherly love implies, are far more valuable and useful than a dull, stagnant conformity of notions or usages.—It is awfully possible for persons to be very strenuous about the “mint, anise, and cummin,” while they neglect “the weightier matters of the law;” and to contend for the forms of godliness, while they are destitute of its power. Indeed these are commonly proportioned to each other. The best way to moderate an undue zeal for the external and circumstantial appendages of religion is, to impress the mind more fully with the spirit and the substance of it. As we regard serious and important things, we shall be drawn off

from trifling ones : our time will be occupied ; our attention will be elevated ; our views will be enlarged.

Let me conclude the remark in the language of a man, who was peculiarly qualified to speak on this subject, having so amply illustrated in his preaching and in his life, the happy combination of liberality of feeling, with firmness of conviction ; of friendly intercourse, with attachment to order ; of tolerance in little things, with zeal in great ones. “The true unity of spirit,” says the incomparable Mr. Newton, “is derived from the things in which those who are taught and born of God agree, and should not be affected by those in which they differ. The church of Christ, collectively considered, is an army ; they serve under one Prince, have one common interest, and are opposed by the same enemies. This army is kept up, and the place of those who are daily removed to the church triumphant, supplied entirely by those who are rescued and won from the power of the adversary, which is chiefly effected by the gospel ministry. This consideration should remind ministers that it is highly improper (I might use a stronger expression) to waste much of their time and talents, which ought to be employed against the common foe, in opposing those who, though they cannot exactly agree with them in every smaller point, are perfectly agreed, and ready to

concur with them, in promoting their principal design. A wise statesman, who has a point much at heart which he cannot carry without assistance, will gladly accept of help from persons of all parties on whom he can prevail to join with him; and will not, at such a crisis, preclude himself from this advantage, by an unseasonable discussion, of more minute concerns, in which he knows they must and will be against him. When I see ministers of acknowledged piety and respectable abilities, very busy in defending or confuting the smaller differences which already too much separate those who ought to be of one heart and of one mind, though, while they are fallible, they cannot be exactly of one judgment; I give them credit for their good intention, but I cannot help lamenting the misapplication of their zeal, which, if directed into another channel, would probably make them much more successful in converting souls. Let us sound an alarm in the enemy's camp, but not in our own! —I have some where met with a passage of ancient history; the substance of which, though my recollection of it is but imperfect, I will relate:—‘Two large bodies of force fell in with each other in a dark night. A battle immediately ensued. The attack and the resistance were supported with equal spirit. The contest was fierce and bloody. Great was the slaughter on both sides, and on both sides they were on the point of claiming the victo-

ry ; when the day broke, and as the light advanced, they soon perceived, to their astonishment and grief, that they had been fighting, not with enemies, as they had supposed, but with friends and allies. They had been doing their enemy's work, and weakening the cause they wished to support. The expectation of each party to conquer the other was founded upon the losses the opponents had sustained : and this was what proportionably aggravated their lamentation and distress, when they had sufficient light to shew them the mischief they had done.' Ah ! my friends, if shame be compatible with the heavenly state, as perhaps, in a sense it may, (for believers, when most happy here, are most sensibly ashamed of themselves,) shall we not even then be ashamed to think how often, in this dark world, we mistook our friends for foes : and that, while we thought we were even fighting for the cause of God and truth, we were wounding and worrying the people whom he loved ; and perhaps indulging our own narrow, selfish, party prejudices, under the semblance of zeal for his glory ?"

—Again. Is it possible to read such a narrative as the foregoing, and not see the falsehood and infamy of reproaching men of Mr. Clark's sentiments as Antinomians, or even as persons who lay very little stress on the practical part of the gospel ? If they are ministers that urge the scandal, I would

say—"Candidly examine these materials. I do not expect you to approve of every thing you meet with; but distinguish things that differ. Observe what an attention from the beginning and throughout Mr. Clark paid to the *moral* character and conduct of the members he admitted; and when under no sway, but the influence of his own principles; principles which he knew required such sanctity, and would produce it when properly embraced." I would say—"Bring forward your own standard of practical religion, and let us see its elevation and purity. Are all those clean who bear the vessels of the Lord with you? Would one instance of intoxication lay aside an official character in your community? Would smuggling exclude from the Lord's table with you? Would domestic broils suspend a member from your communion, till the force of reproof was felt, and the justice of it acknowledged?" [Nov. 20, 1772. "A great many persons are now offering themselves to be joined to us in christian fellowship; but we are exceedingly cautious whom we admit; they undergo the strictest examination, first by me privately; then by the whole church. Yet after all it is to be feared some unworthy communicants will creep in."]

But it seems to demand an apology to notice such cavils, and which I fear oftener originate in malignity than in ignorance. When good men,

crucified to the world, and labouring to serve their generation by the will of God, are alarmed, they deserve attention and explanation. They really value the interests of holiness and good works : and it is desirable to remove their fears, by shewing them, from reasoning and from facts, that their pious apprehensions are groundless. But where persons give no evidence of their regard for the glory of God, or the welfare of man ; where they worship nothing but “the god of this world” all the week, and on the sabbath express *their* regrets and fears—we feel very differently. They cannot be in earnest ; their complaints and clamours are railings or pretences. What are holiness and good works to them ? We are here reminded of another objector ; who with a sad face and a pitiful voice exclaimed, when he saw Mary’s zeal, “Why is this waste ? Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor ?” An ignorant by-stander would have supposed that his heart was full of compassion. But he, who knew what was in man, tells us, “that he said this, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.”

—Mr. Clark knew and preached the importance of faith ; and it was impossible for him to say more in honour of it than the sacred writers have done before him. But what did he include

in his notion of faith, and what did he connect with it? An extract from one of his hymns will justly express his sentiment :

That we are saved by faith alone
 God's holy word asserts ;
 But *pride* the doctrine will disown,
 And *wickedness* perverts.

An empty notion some profess,
 And think they now believe ;
 As if to see, was to possess,
 To know, was to receive.

—But those who most themselves deceive,
 And sure destruction win,
 Are such who boast that they believe,
 And yet are slaves to sin.

—Faith is an all-subduing power,
 All-purifying grace ;
 Of holiness brings forth the *flower*,
 And *fruits* of righteousness.

I wish this circumstance to be the more remarked, not only because the reflections to which I have alluded have been uncommonly spread and patronized of late, but also because there was nothing in the form and government of this society that was peculiar. Whatever little difference there may be in other things, with regard to *this* subject, the narrative is but a fair specimen of the attention paid to the religion of the individuals *when admitted*, and as long as they are continued

in all the churches of the orthodox dissenters and Methodists. It is not pretended that all these members are unfeignedly pious. There is no guarding against the intrusion of hypocrites into any society, however strictly constituted or administered: but moral character and conduct are essential to membership: and it is surely sufficient to exonerate a body of people from reproach, when its adherents, as soon as they are detected, are disowned.

—Let those also look over the memoirs of this man, who suspect that in certain societies a great deal of disaffection to government is always secretly working and cherished. What seditious practices will they find in the proceedings here related? What of a dark and a suspicious nature will they discover in any of these public or private meetings? If they pronounce the exercises, in which these deluded creatures engaged, foolish, they cannot say they were dangerous. They were not of a political character or tendency. If ever these people and their minister had a reference to public affairs, it was purely religious; it was for the purpose of humiliation and prayer; and while many of their enemies were drinking, and swearing, and defaming, to shew their loyalty, they were individually and conjointly mourning over the sins of the land, and supplicating the throne of grace for protection and deliverance.

By inspecting these papers a man may see how christian societies are formed, where nothing but toleration is expected from the secular power. He will see that in these communities there is nothing compulsory ; all is founded in conviction, in choice, in spiritual friendship. He will see that the calling of the christian does not sacrifice, but ratify and sanctify the rights of the man.—He may compare these societies with the primitive churches, when no system was established or endowed. He may observe the adaptation there is in them to diffuse themselves, and to multiply ; their fitness for missionary exertions ; their simple, unperplexed, unembarrassed mode of operation in evangelizing a heathen country. He may compare them with the profit of the individuals composing them—with the injunctions of scripture to watch over one another, to consider one another, to provoke one another to love and to good works—with the admonition of the apostle, “Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.” “Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient unto all men”—with the exercise of brotherly reproof, the support of discipline, the purity of the Lord’s table, and our Lord’s rule—“If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear

thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church : but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.”—He may take occasion from hence to inquire, whether there is any thing like mystery in church government. He may ask, whether it was necessary for the scripture to frame any particular or definite system upon the subject. He will see whether the influence which the gospel supplies, and the general laws it lays down, are not sufficient to guide us in all circumstances ; and whether, as where there is no law there is no transgression, any injury can result from different administrations, varying with times and circumstances, and equally allowing of communion with God and social edification.

But some may be ready to ask what authority had such a man to preach at all ? And the question is easily answered.—With regard to his own people ; their choice and approbation.—With regard to the country in which he resided ; the law of the land acknowledging, sanctioning, and protecting his labours.—With regard to God ; command, inclination, capacity, opportunity, success. [After Mr. Clark had for a number of years taken a leading part in religious exercises, with a number of christian friends, who used to assemble with

him on sabbath mornings and evenings, and occasionally at other times, they met by mutual agreement, when he was unanimously requested to be their pastor, and accepted their call; "but," as he observes, "with extreme fear and diffidence." April 13, 1773, he went to the sessions at Devises to get himself licensed, as a preacher. "I have hitherto," he says, "been licensed by the King of kings only; but being in danger of some parish offices, which would be extremely inconvenient for me, as a preacher, I thought it prudent to sue for the protection of the legislature."—When, after preaching several years, Mr. Clark was exercised with a fear that he had intruded himself into the ministry, he betook himself to his heavenly Father to direct him in the path of duty; and his mind was much relieved by having these words forcibly impressed upon it; "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." With respect to his success, *that* has been already noticed.]

Some things are usually, and some things are usefully, connected with the ministerial office, that are by no means inseparable from the essence of it. Mr. Clark was not regularly inducted, nor had he an academical entrance. We are far from despising order; or supposing that learning is of little importance. Institutions, established to pre-

pare men for their public work, are of great utility ; and as God has, in the course of his providence, furnished our churches with them, we would earnestly recommend, that those who are encouraged to give up themselves to the ministry of the word, should avail themselves of the advantage. At the present season we should the more urge it, not only for the invaluable benefits deriveable from them, but to suit the character of the times, and the state of many congregations, in which mere zeal would not, as formerly, secure attention ; and also to keep back many, who, as one justly observes, while they declaim against *men-made* preachers, are fond enough of *self-made* preachers, and go forth with no advice but from their ignorance ; with no consultation but with their own presumption, by which so many settled ministers have thorns planted in their nests, and schisms formed and upheld in their neighbourhoods.

Of old in Israel, there were “schools of the prophets,” from which God generally took his servants : and thus he honoured the use of means. But he occasionally called a messenger from a different condition ; and by endowing and succeeding him, shewed that he was not bound to the use of them. And he does the same now. He gives us rules to go by ; but he will not confine himself. While he discountenances the fanatic, he can pour contempt upon the formalist ; and teach those

who love means not to idolize them. And when he produces exceptions, the circumstances will justify them; and the general rule will be confirmed rather than invalidated. It should therefore be remembered, that Mr. Clark was a man of education and knowledge: he had been prepared for his work, though in a peculiar way; and made every source of his improvement contribute to aid his public work.—It will be well if some of those, who deny the validity of his claim to the office he filled, are able to produce the same number of seals to their ministry as we have reason to believe will authenticate his: or, as all who are alike called, are not equally successful, if they are happy enough to hear the same commendation—“Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” While many differ about trifles; while they are disputing how the work shall be done, and who shall do it, and do nothing; such a man as this steps forward, and bears the burden and heat of the day, and is dismissed to receive a reward dispensed by a rule too frequently overlooked: “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.” Solomon tells us, “He that winneth souls is wise.” And our friend, in admonishing a young minister, has said—

Seek to be useful more than to excel ;
 Who does his work effectual, does it well.

--Whatever curious critics may commend,
 Sure that's done best that answers best the end :
 And preachers would be gainers on the whole,
 To mar a period, and to save a soul.

But was not Mr. Clark an enthusiast? Define the term, and we shall be able to answer. If you mean by enthusiast, a man that pretends to new revelations from heaven, and governs himself by impulses regardless of the written word ; if you mean a man that takes it for granted he is a favourite of heaven, and riots on high in the privileges of the gospel, neglectful of the low claims of duty and common sense ; who consults his imagination instead of his judgment ; who, void of humility and caution, never supposes himself fallible—never doubts his rectitude or his wisdom, and therefore never pauses or inquires ; who only thinks of his mark, but never examines the road he is to go, or the ground he is to tread ; who is indifferent to the rationality of his conduct, insensible to the properties of life, and so engrossed with a favourite point as to resemble a man walking in his sleep, naked and staring, yet feeling and seeing nothing but the dream that inspires and disturbs him—

—If this is to be an enthusiast, Mr. Clark was unworthy of the name—no person could pass a

day or an hour with him, and not be convinced of this. Such a man would never have placed as a motto to one of his works the aphorism of Young—

Reason pursu'd is faith : and unpursu'd
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more.

Or have given to a preacher such advice as this,

And if in public you would useful be,
Make use of all you hear, and all you see.
Observe men's tempers, weaknesses, complaints ;
You may improve by sinners and by saints.
To learn from fools and idiots condescend ;
And on your brethren's labours oft attend.
What you in them approve e'er make your own,
Still imitate the best, but mimic none.
Let every science your attention prove ;
And to converse with humble christian's love.

—Then study nature, nature best will please,
What comes from nature always flows with ease.

—Sound authors too with profit may be read :
But still the scriptures are the fountain-head.

Yet ever search them with unbiass'd mind,
Take them, not as you wish, but as you find :
Nor seek to bend, and thus profanely choose
What only suits your predetermined views ;
Or act the part of that prepost'rous fool
Who rashly dyed his pattern to his wool.*

* Alluding to the folly of a man, who being employed to dye a furnace of wool to the colour of a pattern, not being able to bring the wool to the colour of his pattern, in order to make them match, put the pattern into the furnace with the wool.

Is the following too, the language of a wrong-headed enthusiast? or even of a man who has more zeal than knowledge?

—Fickle professors you will also find,
Who change about with every turn of wind;
From place to place, from sect to sect they stray,
As fancy, or as interest leads the way:
The last with them is right, all else condemn'd,
All truth's within their present party hemm'd:
Bigots to any sect that suits their will,
And change they ne'er so oft are bigots still.

—With real christians too you've much to bear;
Those are not always wise, who are sincere:
Their tempers, manners, likings often clash,
Some too remiss you'll find, and some too rash.
And when a conscientious man goes wrong,
He's hard to turn—his prejudice is strong.
Much wisdom, therefore, you, my friend, will need,
To judge between the motive and the deed:
To shew a just severity to sin,
And yet with tender love th' offender win.
—Of love unfeign'd to all the pattern give,
And teach with meekness, and with meekness live.

Those doctrines preach that prove your Maker just,
And bring the haughty sinner to the dust.

Set forth th' experience of the christian man,
And urge obedience on the gospel plan.
Of "legal preacher," never fear the cry,
Or aught, to please a sickly taste, deny.
The *pious* hearer will your plan approve,
And edify by all your work of love.

But cav'ling coxcombs you can ne'er content,
 Though pure your doctrine, and your zeal well spent.
 Such pow'r to mortal man was never giv'n ;
 Nor could an angel, though sent down from heaven.

It surely ill accords to deal in strife,
 While you are dealing forth the bread of life.

Some make the pulpit like the wrangling bar ;
 The vehicle of peace, a seat of war :
 But scolding in a sermon, with hard names,
 No good will cherish ; but it oft inflames.

Then you, O man of God, let these alone ;
 By setting up the truth, pull error down :
 Like arms of a true balance, one must drop
 Just in proportion as the other's up.

—But what makes christian discipline so rare ?
 Our christian churches are not what they were.
 In former days, the shepherds led their sheep ;
 Taught them what paths to shun—what paths to keep :
 To go before their flock was then their pride ;
 But now, too oft, the sheep their shepherds guide.
 Church management is rated too by pay,
 And pride and passion love to bear the sway ;
 A spirit of democracy prevails,
 And thus authority and order fails.

—As all the world acknowledge the same sun,
 In former days all churches were but one :
 A general cause they all combin'd to make ;
 If one dismiss'd, the rest refused to take.
 To gain most members now each party strives,
 And by the loss of other churches thrives.
 To excommunicate no way alarms,
 Some other church receives with open arms.

But what accession does religion gain
 By these divisions and distinctions vain ?
 Has Christ in his true church one member more ?
 Or is the man more holy than before ?
 Does it not oft'ner minister to strife,
 And draw th' attention from the christian life ?——

—But if by enthusiasm is intended the application to divine things—of that energy, that fervour of mind, which it is supposed always attends genius, and is essential to distinction in the arts and sciences : if, as a term of reproach, it is to decry a man who gives religion the most decided preference to every rival claim ; who feels such a powerful devotedness to it, that difficulties rather increase than diminish his attachment ; who is so alive to its excellency that he complains more of his defects than of his proficiencies ; who is so united to its welfare, that he sympathises in all its varieties, and rejoices or weeps with it—who is so governed by it, as to make it the centre of attraction, the end to which he renders every thing subordinate and subservient ; I would say—How is it that a term generally used with approbation, should become in a particular case ignominious ? Why should warmth be allowed and admired in every other subject, and condemned in that which beyond all comparison deserves and justifies it ? Why should it not only excuse but extol the painter and the poet, and degrade the christian, whose

objects and pursuits are as superior to those of all other men, as the soul is more valuable than the body, and the heaven is higher than the earth? I would inquire—Whether it is possible to consider religion as important at all, without regarding it as all-important? Whether we can have fairly weighed eternal things against temporal, unless we see that there is no proportion between them? Whether we are required in the scripture to attach ourselves to God a little, or to “love him with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our strength?” Whether we are to obey him partially and formally, while the heart is far from him; or we are to be fervent in spirit while serving him? Whether that moderation which some so highly applaud, as adjusting precisely the medium between being too little religious, and righteous over much, and which attempts to reconcile and to satisfy the due claims of the world and of conscience, is not the very thing the word of God brands as most incompatible with our christian profession? “So then, because thou art *luke warm*, and neither *cold* nor *hot*, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” In the latter sense of the word Paul was an enthusiast. He felt such a commanding interest in the cause of the Redeemer, as gave an unity to his active and diversified life, and produced that excellency in his christian profession for which he is commended by many, who

yet ridicule every practical approach to it in others. In this sense too, Mr. Clark deserves the honourable reproach. But justice requires that we make one concession. It regards some of Mr. Clark's thoughts and expressions, which, in appearance, at least, and especially when presented to those that knew not the man, are exceptionable. There is, perhaps, nothing in the narrative that he could not have explained rationally and satisfactorily, had opportunity been given him : but as they now stand, there are several things that deserve notice, and I shall speak freely.

With regard to the remarkable circumstance mentioned page the fifteenth, and by which he was encouraged to go on at a moment when he determined to renounce preaching, I shall hardly hazard an opinion. I leave it to the judgment of the reader, and conclude that it will be viewed variously. It may be proper however to remark, that I was unwilling to admit the marvellous part of the event, till I had fully examined the case ; fearing that some crude and ill-informed religionists are occasionally tempted to trench slightly on the demands of honesty and truth, to carry points for the glory of God ! But in this instance, every character stood fair ; and I am fully persuaded from what has come under my investigation, that there was no collusion, and that there could have been none. The

fact is as well authenticated, as the overruled result of it was happy and useful.

Mr. Clark, page the eighth, speaks of his going to preach at some place; and tells us that "He ventured to trust entirely on the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost; and without any previous study or arrangement of the subject, preached from Mark xvi. 16." And adds, "This I was enabled to do with so much ease and comfort to myself, and satisfaction to the audience, that thenceforward I never made use of any notes; but was enabled to cast myself entirely on the divine goodness." Here we presume is an allusion to the promise given by our Saviour to his disciples, and which has frequently been mistaken and abused:—"When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Here it may be proper to observe: first, that the text has no reference to preaching at all; as appears from the words preceding:—"but beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles." Secondly, if it had such a reference originally, the justness of the application in the

present instance would be questioned. Modern ministers are not apostles. The miraculous and ordinary assistance of the Holy Ghost are very distinguishable. There is nothing that as preachers we have to be inspired with. We want ability to communicate what is already revealed, and to impress it upon the hearts of our hearers: and God forbid that we should ever think mere study, or reasoning, or eloquence, can succeed in securing the objects of the christian ministry, without "the ministration of the spirit." But if "the preacher be wise," as Solomon remarks, "he will find out acceptable words, as well as words of truth:" he will see that activity and dependence, instead of being incompatible, require each other; and that instrumentality, so far from excluding agency, supposes it. In this case, the advice of Paul to Timothy is worthy of our regard. Timothy was ordained "according to the prophecies which went before on him," and possessed extraordinary qualifications and assistance—yet, says his zealous but judicious admonisher, "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all;" or as it is in the margin, "in all things."

Knowing Mr. Clark's views, I am certain he did not intend by the expression he used, all the

meaning some will attach to it : nor would he plead for any thing like inspiration according to the common acceptation of the word. But here is a mad enthusiast :—here is a young unfurnished preacher, who takes up the memoir, and justifies his ignorance, his incapacity for thought, his idleness, his love of gossiping by an expectation of divine and immediate assistance. I think Mr. Clark, as far as he could have acted otherwise, erred : but before we exculpate another as far as we justify him, let the imitator be as obviously called to preach, let him be as much and as unavoidably engaged, let him possess the same education and talents, the same fancy and fluency ; let him also be equally devoted to general improvement. For Mr. Clark—and it is but just to observe it, after mentioning that he preached habitually without writing or premeditating his sermons—adds, “I considered, however, that this by no means excused me from studying, in a general way, God’s holy word and wonderful works ; but rather enforced the necessity of it so much the more, that I might lay up a stock of things new and old, ready, when called, to bring forth to the public. My business also being with persons of different descriptions, especially the working poor, gave me an opportunity of knowing the real manners of men, and seeing more into the depravity of human nature. My philosophical researches also, to which I was exceed-

ingly attached, served to enlarge my ideas of things as well as of men." I would also observe that Mr. Clark, unlike too many of this class, was never heard to censure those who preached in a way different from his own. He exceedingly enjoyed the labours of his brethren, and not only commended their services, but the preparations for them. "In the following lines," says he in the preface to his *Novitius*, "the reader may trace somewhat of the method which the author himself has been led to adopt; and which he hopes it has pleased God to own, to the conversion and edification of many.—But he would be far from limiting his brethren in the ministry to any particular method: let every one consult his proper gift, and employ it in the best manner he is able—but all to the use of edifying. Some have a brilliant imagination, some a solid judgment, some a fluent utterance, and some a strong memory. I censure none but those who bury their talent, and those who misemploy it; those who seek to please themselves; and those who seek to please men." In the same liberal strain, are the following lines from the work itself:

—Next for your study might I drop a hint?
 With no dull rules would I your genius stint.
 Some preachers are with fertile fancies bless'd,
 To rove at large o'er nature suits them best.

From every object they can catch a theme,
 And the whole universe their study deem !
 Others there are more moderate limits keep,
 Their subjects fewer, but they dive more deep.
 In either case retirement may befriend
 To methodize the thought—the language mend.
 But study too intense brings many a grief ;
 It dulls the spirits—makes the manners stiff.
 Too studious, some their native ardour damp
 With massy volumes, and the midnight lamp :
 The frame's enervated, too much confin'd ;
 And gloomy vapours overspread the mind.
 But you, Novitius, take the middle course,
 Nor be remiss, nor yet your genius force :
 On no one study too intensely fix,
 But exercise and air discreetly mix.
 Should you prefer to preach extempore,
 You may be less correct, but much more free.
 This was the way our good forefathers taught,
 Till, learning scarce, illit'rate men were sought :
 Now learned doctors keep the custom still,
 To ease their sloth, or else to shew their skill.
 —To preach by notes can be no sin indeed,
 Or read your sermons if you find you need :
 But wherefore then should you conceal the book,
 Or look on it as if you did not look ?

—An honest, warm effusion from the heart,
 Must sure exceed the nicest forms of art :
 —Ideas will spring up as you go on,
 And honest zeal for many faults atone ;
 Thoughts new enkindled set your soul on fire,
 And heavenly eloquence your tongue inspire.

—But though your doctrine should be e'er so sound,
 Doctrine unfelt is seldom useful found.
 Not at the head take aim, with notions dry,
 Nor o'er the head let useless bullets fly
 Of learned lore ; but level at the heart
 Your whole artillery, and strike that part.
 And from *your* heart, O send them burning too,
 For balls red-hot most execution do.
 If in the pulpit you appear unmoved,
 Your sermon does small good, howe'er approved.
 Yet do not rant enthusiastic stuff,
 How weak no matter, so 'tis loud enough !
 But temper zeal with wisdom and with love,
 So men shall profit, and your God approve.
 —Then for your language, be it chaste and pure,
 Above contempt, though level to the poor.
 Yet not in phrases quaint, and vulgar speech
 Attempt to play the buffoon, but to preach.
 Know that your place a dignity demands,
 For in God's name a gospel preacher stands.
 —A striking simile you'll sometimes find
 T' illustrate truth, and fix it on the mind :
 Or with an anecdote attention move.
 Lest dull monotony an opiate prove.
 —Nor yet, my friend, affect the orator
 In pompous diction, sounding metaphor.
 Disguise not truth, proud eloquence to nourish,
 As school-boys lose the letter in the flourish.
 Enticing speech may loud applauses gain
 From shallow hearers, and make preachers vain :
 A feather this to tickle itching ears ;
 But 'tis warm truth must melt a soul to tears :
 'Tis this, when aided by th' almighty arm,
 Will wonders work, and miracles perform.

—Whate'er your subject be, let heavenly zeal
 And love to souls direct your method still :
 Nor let strict rules, which pedagogues may teach,
 Divert you from the end for which you preach.
 Method, we grant, is proper, but 'tis cold,
 If not attended with a pathos bold.

In nice particulars to waste your time,
 When souls are perishing, account a crime.
 Some preachers cut the bread of life so small,
 The greater part does through the basket fall ;
 All their divisions subdivided yet,
 'Twere task enough the numbers to repeat ;
 So full of heads, that nothing else there seems—
 No room is left for body, life, or limbs.

—Some, day and night upon a subject pore,
 And rack invention till it yields no more ;
 To shew how much they can bring forth at will
 From a small text, and thus display their skill :
 Whate'er the text, the sermon still must be
 A little body of divinity.

These in the study quench that ardent fire
 Which in the pulpit should their souls inspire :
 Exhausting so their subjects when alone,
 That when they bring them forth, the savour's gone.

—Nor less, my friend, should you bethink your time,
 While in a work so useful, so sublime.

Sweet is the gospel, and it well beseems
 To dwell with rapture on its glorious themes ;
 Yet some discourses would be full as good
 If they were more compress'd in latitude :
 They lose in substance what they gain in length,
 As thread spun out too fine impairs its strength.

—Some are more garrulous the more they're lost,
 And when they've least to say, enlarge the most.

I hope I need not apologize for the insertion of these extracts. They contain important hints, many of which are expressed in language that shews a considerable talent for poetry. They are, therefore, specimens of the kind of composition in which the author delighted. They also deliver his sentiments with regard to preaching: and will serve to qualify some passages in the memoir. They fully prove, that while he pleaded for ease and fervour, he did not oppose propriety and decorum. And surely it ought to be inquired, whether many of his strictures are not just; and whether all the evils to be dreaded are found on one side of the question, and nothing is to be apprehended from the opposite extreme? If the whisper could only be heard by *some*—we might suggest—Whether there is not an overdoing, as well as an under-doing? Whether habitual thought is not commonly preferable to the appointment of particular times for study? Whether general meditation is not more advantageous than textual reflection, which, while it gives a man skill in dividing and explaining words and phrases, adds but little to his intellectual stores?

A man who is always attentive and observing; who is well versed in general knowledge; who has amassed ideas upon every subject on which he is called to teach; who has rendered himself very familiar with the language of scripture; and who

speaks out of the abundance of the heart—such a man will rarely be at a loss, or preach amiss. His thoughts will easily find their proper places, and suitable language will clothe them, if he does not consume that enormous quantity of time expended by some in their sermonic preparations, to the injury of their health, and the neglect of social duties. In all other cases, where men have similar qualifications, we are not afraid of every thing they deliver on the spur of the occasion, or conclude that it must be incoherent and foolish.

We more than once in the narrative meet with a casual presentation of passages of scripture, and a seasonable occurrence of admonitions or promises on which some considerable stress was laid. I do not remember indeed any incongruous application of this kind; and Mr. Clark had too much wisdom to be led into any improprieties by such a sanction—yet it must be confessed, the practice is perilous; and I have known many cases in which it has been very injuriously indulged. The text read, or recollected just at the time, has determined the person as to the state of his soul, or the path of duty: it has operated to the removal of his distress, or the solution of his doubt. But though all the scripture is true in itself, many parts of it may be erroneous in their application to the present case of any individual. The suitableness of the part occurring is commonly supposed to prove that

it is immediately from God : but this suitableness is the question ; and the man who decides it is the party interested, and therefore the most liable to mistake. The will of God may really call us off from a pursuit, when by this means the word of God is urging us on. Jonah probably was encouraged when he came down to the sea side, to find a ship just ready to sail : when a man is in a wrong course, a piece of scripture, unexpectedly met with, may keep him much in the same way. The angel of the Lord commissioned Gideon to go and deliver Israel as he was threshing wheat : a man engaged in the same work feels an inclination to go forth and preach, but has some little doubt as to his sufficiency and success---when lo ! these words came to his mind, “ Arise, for the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour :” and his doubts are scattered like dust before the wind. A pious female meets with an eligible suitor, but has some conflict between inclination and conviction, founded on religious character : but she is resolved to yield, by opening the Bible, and casting her eye on the admonition, “ Arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with the men, doubting nothing : for I have sent them.”* A person thinks of engaging

* Let no one object that the passage is not *quite* the thing ; the difference between the singular and plural number ; between *him* and *them*, is nothing in these sublime cases : for the greater includes the less : and trifles cannot be seen when we soar.

in some enterprise; and it may be his duty not only to undertake it, but to undertake it immediately: but he is determined by the address of our Saviour suddenly starting into his mind, though not originally delivered quite on a similar occasion, "What thou doest, do quickly." I have read of a good old man who used to exhort people to live by the ten commandments, and not by impulses: and he used to tell how he got free from delusion himself. When he was a lad, he was poor and pious, and thought that all suggestions in scripture style came from heaven. Walking in the field in want of firing, by the side of a neighbour's hedge, he wished for some of it to burn: instantly the word came—*In all this Job sinned not*, and in faith of this, he began to make free with his neighbour's wood. But happily he discovered his error; tried the application of the text by the command—*Thou shalt not steal*, or, as the ingenious relator remarks, the word of God might have led him out of the church into the jail.

After all, this is only specifying the danger on one side, though it is by far the most common side. But the word of God has awful passages; and there are persons of a melancholy temperament, or labouring under dejection from temporary causes. Such persons, by a principle of association, are always prone to attract towards themselves every thing of a dreadful nature. What wonder, there-

fore, when a threatening of scripture strikes the mind in such a case, if the man viewing it as a divine intimation, is plunged into distraction or despair. We cannot love the word of God too much, nor consult it too often. But we are to “*search the scripture ;*” and it is “to dwell in us richly in *all wisdom.*” We are not to turn it into a kind of lottery, or to use it as a spell, or a charm; but to “understand what we read.” We are not to take it separately, but connectedly : and if we would be directed by it as to our duty, or satisfied by it as to our state, we are to peruse its contents with diligence, humility, and prayer ; to observe the passages that refer to persons of our character or condition, that describe the temptations to which we are exposed, or the trials under which we labour. In this way we shall find that the word of God is not only designed, but calculated for general and perpetual use, and has such an infinite affluence in it as to subserve “*all things that pertain to life and godliness.*” Whether we are rulers or subjects, masters or servants, parents or children, husbands or wives : whether we are young or old, rich or poor, it lends us the most appropriate assistance ; and is “a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.”

I most cordially subscribe to the doctrine of divine influence, not in the lax sense in which it is admitted by all that make any pretensions to

religion; but in the stricter meaning of the word. I believe that all good is derived from, and perpetuated by, the agency of the Holy Spirit. Yet this doctrine is frequently expressed by preachers and writers in a way that is not perfectly just. Every thing is referred not efficiently, but immediately to God. We are wrought upon, not employed. We are passively blessed, not actuated to exertion. The means which idolatrously keep some from the God of all grace, are too much discarded by others. The motive in many cases we are aware cannot be too much praised; as it is designed to secure the glory of God. But if it needs not to be purified, it requires to be enlightened. It should be remembered, that God does not operate less really, because he operates instrumentally. The means are his own, as well as the success of them. And the production of an effect by a series of means, deriving their operation and their being from God, instead of detracting from his glory, displays it, much more than a sudden result without any intervention. The one is a violation of God—the other an action. The one proves his omnipotence—the other shews also his wisdom and his condescension. The one astonishes—the other instructs. The one requires nothing—the other calls for prayer and obedience.—We are not wrought upon in religion as masons work on stone, or as carpenters on wood; we are rational and moral subjects;

God works by setting us to work ; he “ works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.” *He* does not repent, but he enables *us* to repent : *he* does not believe, but he enables *us* to believe. He not only works in us, but even by us. He does not give me wisdom, without making me wise : he informs me ; and while he is the teacher, I am the learner. I am not *carried* forward like a man asleep in a ship : he leads me, he aids me : I cannot go a step without him, but *I go* with him. In doing good, I am not moved by mechanism, but motive. Renewing grace does not destroy the order, the subordination, the use of our spiritual powers, but restores them, establishes them, sanctifies them.

There are some who seem to view the means of grace as mere tests of obedience to the will of God ; as mere arbitrary expedients, which, however used, leave it perfectly uncertain whether any advantage can be derived from them. We are to regard them as a way in which we are to stand, in case God should go by and leave a blessing ; not as a road leading to an end which we certainly and naturally approach, if we walk on in it. The labours of the husbandman are vain, without the divine blessing : but there is a vast difference between his sowing flints, and his sowing corn : a crop, by the influence of heaven, not only attends the seed, but grows out of it : the means of grace

have a passive suitableness in them, they are adapted to do us good by their very nature ; and the blessing is made to flow from the use of them, as well as to be obtained in it. They are not spoken of in scripture as experiments ; nor should we employ them just to try, whether it be *possible* to gain any benefit : the promise is more encouraging—"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." "Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth ; and he that seeketh, findeth ; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

We may here also notice the doctrine of divine providence. We believe in its universality and minuteness. With men an attention to little things prevents an attention to great things ; and an attention to great things prevents an attention to little things. But it is otherwise with God. The heaven of heavens cannot contain him ; but he condescends to dwell with man upon the earth. He wings an angel, and he teaches the spider to weave his web : nor can it be unworthy of him to sustain what was not beneath him to create. There is dignity as well as truth in the language of our Saviour ; "a sparrow falleth not to the ground without your heavenly Father ; yea, the very hairs of

your head are all numbered." Yet I do not think we are justified in accustoming ourselves to such phrases as these, "The Lord broke my leg;" "The Lord set my house on fire;" "The Lord blighted my apples." Nor are we friendly to many of those expressions which seem to intimate, that the Lord often steps out of his ordinary course to indulge us. It savours of self-importance, while the acknowledgment may really issue from gratitude. Our speech should always be with grace; but it should be *seasoned* only with salt. The frequent use of the name of God, connected with things by no means uncommon or peculiar, but which have hereby an air of wonder and mystery given them, produces in religion the effect of the mock-heroic in poetry: and may not only diminish veneration, but excite ridicule. For things that are the same with regard to God, are not so with regard to us.

In reference to any event in life, we are more than authorized to say, "If the Lord will:" but it is the sentiment that renders the diction valuable: and as the mind may feel the sentiment when the lips are silent, so the tongue may utter the words, when the mind feels nothing; yea, the individual may even render the language more than insignificant: it may become "as the body without the spirit," which is not only dead, but disagreeable and offensive. I have heard of a preacher, among a certain class of christians, who were formerly

much more renowned than they now are for disturbing the audience by their frequent and noisy assents in prayer. Conceiving that it was generally, at least, an idle, unmeaning usage, in order to convince them, he said as he was going on in his devotion, "Lord, take me immediately to heaven;" by the force of custom, "Amen" was kindly exclaimed from many a worthy brother and sister, that would have been shocked at the thought of wishing him dead. And I knew a clerk, who was very conscientious in giving out any intimation from the desk, who once said, "There will be no preaching here next Thursday, *God willing*."— But "a preacher should be sparing of his smile;" and never indulge it to expose, but to rectify. I wish to be understood. It is not habitual piety we oppose; it is not the introduction of it into all our concerns; for whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God. But it may be proper to suggest to some, that as there is "a form of godliness," so is there "a form of knowledge," and "a form of words;" that genuine religion deals more in things than in terms; that it induces us to be more concerned for the reality than the appearance of devotion; that though we cannot be righteous over-much as to principle and disposition, we may as to ostentatious display, untimely exertions, and irregular actings out of our place and beyond our power. A chris-

tian, like the sun, is to do good, not by noise, but by shining; he is to operate principally not by his tongue, but by his life; by the consistency, the holiness, and the charms of his example. "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

A man should study the dispensations of providence. "Whoever is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." But of the events befalling us, two views may be taken.—First. These events may be very distinguishing; and our privileges peculiarly great. In this case, though they may be noticed by others, they can hardly be so well announced by ourselves. Humility seems to require the concealment, rather than the exposure. Paul said, if I must needs glory, I will glory in things that concern my infirmities. He had visions and revelations of the Lord: and once he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words. After such a distinction, some would not have been able to contain themselves for a week or a day. They would have gone forth, and have said to every one they met; "Where do you think I have been?" Why "in the third heaven." "And what do you think I have heard?"

—Why “unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” But Paul does not divulge the honour for more than fourteen years—and then he was urged by slander; and mentions it, not in his own praise, but in his own vindication, and to magnify his office in the eyes of those that unrighteously degraded him.—While he is candid enough to acknowledge at the same time, that it had nearly proved too much for him; and that he would have been exalted above measure, but for a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him.—Secondly. We will suppose these events nothing more than common occurrences. In this case, though they may be worthy of attention and review to the individual himself, they can hardly be interesting or useful to others. Thus, while in the one case publication may be improper, in the other it becomes needless. As things diminish by distance, so they are enlarged by nearness. Here persons are liable to err; and good men indulge in self-consequence, without knowing it. A work, that appears the offspring of pride, only results from contracted views; from peculiar associations and habits; from a real wish to glorify God. If this be not taken into the account when writings of a certain kind are perused, we may censure the motive, as much as we condemn the execution. I would observe also, that in addition to these circumstances, we should endeavour to comprehend

their language. It is to be lamented that many of our authors should use a lexicon peculiar to themselves; but since this is the case, to judge them we must examine it: and yet many have it not at hand. When Mr. Clark says, "Such a day I had a call to London;" a stranger to his dialect may conclude that he was referring to some kind of voice, or impulse, or be puzzled to understand his meaning; when all that *he* intended was, that circumstances rendered it his duty.

And here, before I conclude, I would remark the propriety of a decisive and intelligible mode of expression in religious concerns. It is not enough for a man to render it possible to understand his language; he should render it easy: he should endeavour to render it obvious, not only to the initiated, but to those that are without. He knows not who may hear him, or read him beyond his own circle. Some good men are not aware of the injury they have done their cause by the use of certain terms and phrases. Some of these being early met with in a work, have led the reader to prejudge and throw down the book, which he might otherwise have been induced to read to advantage. It is useless for the author to say he was misunderstood; and that the reader appears to have been full of prejudice. Who would use language so dark or so dangerous, that numbers have not views to comprehend or to qualify? A man who has

eyes can step over a stone, but who would throw stumbling blocks in the way of the blind?—The figurative language of scripture has often been rendered very exceptionable. Such words as resurrection, creation, regeneration, or the new birth, are finely applied by the sacred writers to the subject of religion: but instead of taking in the simple reference of the passage, the metaphor has been pushed to excess, and the mistaken declaimer has supposed that whatever is true of the image, is true of the doctrine. Hence, such expressions have been used as would lead many to imagine, that in our renovation we are perfectly passive; hence, some of their readers seem to feel a kind of diabolical acquiescence in their present condition, as if their remaining in it was their misfortune, and not their crime. The same may be said of such declarations as these—"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "The prayer of the wicked is an abomination." These, separate from the positions and references, which would explain and vindicate them, are often delivered so abstractedly, as to become erroneous and hurtful: men who are not conscious of religion, concluding that all their actions are the same; and that it matters not whether they go to the house of God, or remain at home; employ the sabbath in reading the scripture, or the news of the week,—“This is not our inten-

tion." Why then incur the danger? Why occasion an abuse, which you could so easily escape?

It is worthy of remark, how much of the impression, that a very celebrated review aimed some time ago to make against methodism, was derived from this kind of materials. Though we have no reason to believe that the writers in question would be friendly to evangelical truth, however soberly and judiciously explained; yet the weapons they wielded were certainly furnished not so much by the doctrine of the two magazines, as the quaint phrases, the cant terms, the low conceits, the mystical jargon, the spiritual prodigies, the unqualified and abrupt decisions, with which, it must be confessed, they have too much abounded. And surely nothing of this was necessary in these publications. As far as the extracts from them contained *real* and *valuable* truth, neither the statement, nor the effect, would have been injured by a different and unexceptionable representation. There are authors firmly attached to the doctrines of the gospel, and who have written in the illustration and defence of them, that we should not fear trusting in the hands of any class of readers. We do not mean to intimate that they would find nothing but what they approved; but the subject, and not the author, would offend; the displeasure would be "the offence of the cross;" it would be the reproach of faith, and not of folly—of the former we should

never be ashamed : in the latter we should never glory.

The reader will perceive that I have wandered a little in some of these remarks ; and that much of what I have advanced applies but very partially and indirectly to the worthy author and subject of the memoir we have reviewed. But from inferior faults, I have taken occasion to deliver myself, without reserve upon faults of the same species, appearing in their more enlarged and extreme forms. It is possible, it is probable, that by the use of this liberty censure will be incurred. It was not courted. It is not dreaded. The editor has followed the convictions which he has felt from an attentive survey of a certain portion of the religious world for some years, and in circumstances not unfavourable to observations. Under infirmities which remind him that his breath is in his nostrils, he has endeavoured to write in the fear of God. He presumes that none wish to be considered as infallible ; that much harm has been done by injudicious defence and indiscriminate applause ; that useful bodies of men may be rendered more useful ; that while attached to the excellency of a cause, we yet should be impartial enough to see what is erroneous, and magnanimous enough to concede what is untenable. Love need not, and should not be blind. I admire the person of a friend, but surely this does not require me to

praise a stain his face has accidentally contracted : rather let me endeavour gently to wipe it off, and not suffer strangers to identify it with the figure.

As additional specimens of Mr. Clark's manner of writing, and for the sake of the useful hints they contain, I here insert a hymn—a versification of a psalm, which, though so exquisitely beautiful, Dr. Watts has omitted to notice—and an address to parents and tutors. The editor presumes the propriety of his uniting to this work the address he delivered at the mournful funeral of his friend will not be questioned.

THE BREVITY OF LIFE.

SWIFT as an arrow cuts its way
Through the soft yielding air ;
Or as the sun's more subtle ray,
Or lightning's sudden glare ;
Or as an eagle to the prey,
Or shuttle through the loom ;
So haste our fleeting lives away,
So rush we to the tomb.

Like airy bubbles, lo ! we rise,
And dance upon life's stream :
Till soon the air that caus'd destroys
Th' attenuated frame.
Down the swift stream we glide apace,
And carry death within ;
Then brake, and scarcely leave a trace
To shew that we have been.

The man the wisest of our kind,
 Who length of days had seen ;
 To birth and death a time assign'd,
 But none to life between.
 Yet lo ! what consequences close
 This transient state below ;
 Eternal joys, or, missing those,
 Interminable woe.

THE CXXXVII PSALM PARAPHRASED.

By Babel's streams we sat and wept ;
 For Zion's woes our hearts did rend :
 Our harps, in tune no longer kept,
 Upon the willows we suspend.

For there our foes insult us still,
 And taunting, aggravate our wrongs—
 " Captives display your boasted skill ;
 " Come sing us one of Zion's songs."

The songs of Zion are the Lord's,
 And his are all the notes we raise ;
 We will not touch the tuneful chords,
 Till we can sound them in his praise.

While Zion lies in ruin still,
 Dare we her dear remembrance leave ?
 No, first these hands shall lose their skill,
 These tongues shall to our palates cleave.

Remember, Lord, how Edom's sons
 Proudly contemn'd us in our woes ;
 Triumph'd o'er Zion's scatter'd stones,
 And urg'd to rage her cruel foes.

But God will Babylon destroy,
 Her righteous doom shall none retard :
 And happy he who sees the day,
 When she shall meet her due reward.

TO PARENTS, &c.

PARENTS, and all who have in charge
 To form the rising race,
 Your duties numerous are and large !
 And awful is your place.

The honour of your Maker's name,
 The welfare of mankind ;
 Your children's happiness and fame,
 Are all to you consign'd.

O then invoke the aid of heav'n,
 Superior wisdom ask ;
 That love and prudence may be giv'n
 To undertake the task.

And would you much relieve your toil ?
 Then meet their tempers right :
 False tenderness is sure to spoil ;
 And harshness to affright.

Nor yet neglect restraint too long,
 Till nature's wild and rude :
 Habits of vice may grow so strong
 As scarce to be subdu'd.

The garden of the youthful mind
 Must not be left alone :
 Some work therein, you'll daily find,
 Is needful to be done.

The useful plant and pleasant flow'r
 Are rais'd with care and toil :
 But noxious weeds too oft o'erpower ;
 Congenial with the soil.

While green the twig, and pliant still,
 Then bend it to its place ;
 While warm the wax, impress the seal,
 Which time will not efface.

And first, unto the great Supreme
 Direct their high regard :
 With solemn awe to speak of him,
 His name, his works, his word.

And ever let them rev'rence yield
 To his appointed day :
 Not saunt'ring o'er the streets or fields
 In idleness or play ;

But to the temples of his grace,
 Your young immortals lead ;
 And what they hear, at home impress,
 And there the scriptures read.

Next, to the pow'rs which God ordains,
 Enjoin submission due ;
 Obedience to superiors gains
 Authority to you.

Teach them with equals to forego
 All bickerings and strife ;
 Peace and good nature often know
 A long and happy life.

From savage cruelty, O turn
 Betimes the tender mind !
 Who torture insects, soon may learn
 To butcher human kind !

But every kind and gentle deed
 Should your applauses meet :
 Sure those who kindness always need,
 Should others kindly treat.

To make distress their merriment,
 Deserves severest blame :
 The wanton crime God may resent,
 And make your child the same !

Immodest speeches, songs obscene,
 Teach them to shun and hate ;
 With what is vulgar, low or mean,
 In language or in gait.

But let their minds retain and prize,
 More than their daily food,
 The choicest sayings of the wise,
 And maxims of the good.

Dishonest practices, and mean,
 Discountenance always ;
 Nor let a knavish trick be seen,
 E'en in their childish plays.

To hate a lie, to love the truth,
 Inculcate all you can :
 These make an amiable youth,
 And a respected man.

Though now their labour needless seems,
 To industry inure :
 What may befall in future times,
 No mortal can be sure.

Let them not idly pass a day,
 Some useful study find,
 Or innocent and healthful play,
 To recreate the mind.

But with what play-mates e'er you trust
Your darling, O beware !
Example, like corroding rust,
Will tarnish all your care.

Who would be wise, must with the wise
Associate day by day :
Oft, deeds that manhood signalize
Are learned in youthful play.

Thus taught to act their part aright
On life's important stage,
They now will prove your heart's delight,
And soothe your drooping age.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE INTERMENT.

THESE are the remains of the Rev. John Clark ;—once—alas ! what language death compels us to use !—once—the kind neighbour and friend of these mourning connexions, who are bedewing his memory with their tears ;—once the affectionate father of this beloved son, who is raising his streaming eyes to a nobler relation, and saying, “thou art the guide of my youth ;”—once—the tender husband of this pious widow, who is endeavouring to say, “the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord ;”—once—the faithful pastor of this bereaved people, who are “mourning most of all that they shall see his face and hear his voice no more.”*

* [Jan. 5, 1779. Being then 34 years of age, Mr. C. made proposals of marriage to a christian friend, who, on the 19th of Dec. 1771, came out of mere curiosity to hear him preach, and was deeply convinced by the word, of her sinful and dangerous condition, and was led to repentance. The name of this christian friend, and the time of their marriage are not mentioned in

And for what purpose are we assembled together !—Not to flatter. Who could indulge in adulation with a grave yawning under his eye ?—Not even to eulogize the dead ;—not to enlarge on the excellency of his character, his intellectual powers, his acquired endowments, the originality of his preaching, or the success of his labours in the conversion of souls, and the formation and enlargement of a flourishing christian church. And the reason is—not because we deem funeral eulogy improper. The memory of the just *is* blessed ; and we *ought* to hold up to view examples of divine grace and to glorify God in them.—Not because we feel a disinclination to speak of the deceased. It would exceedingly gratify the feelings of him who is now addressing you if he were favoured with an opportunity to do justice to a character he has always held in the highest esteem.—But it would violate

his life. But on the 27th of August, 1786, she was delivered of a son. Oct. 1, in the presence of the congregation, he solemnly devoted him to the Lord in baptism ; adding this desire to the notice of it, “ O may he baptize him with the Holy Spirit and make him mete for the enjoyment of himself forever.—His name was called John.” May 19, 1787 ; this child died. Nov. 29, following, his wife was delivered of another son. Feb. 3, 1788, he baptized him in presence of the congregation, and called him by the name of his deceased brother, John. His wife and this son survived him. It does not appear from his Memoirs that he had any more, than the two children above mentioned.]

order by anticipating what custom has rendered more proper to bring forward in a funeral sermon, and which will be delivered within these walls on Lord's day morning by our young friend and brother, who now fully succeeds to the office of the departed man of God.—May a double portion of the spirit of Elijah rest on Elisha.

—What then has drawn us around this vault, and how shall we occupy the few moments sacred to this service? We are come hither to see that creatures are nothing; that man in his best estate is altogether vanity; that human distinctions and advantages are precarious and vanishing. Here the rich and the poor meet together. The small and the great are here. And how dieth the wise man? Even as the fool. “The voice said, cry; and I said, what shall I cry—All flesh is grass and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.”

We are called hither to contemplate the evil of sin. It is this that has turned us out of paradise into a wilderness; it is this that has cursed the ground and sown it with thorns and briers: it is this that has stored the elements with mischief; it is this that has produced earthquakes, famine, pestilence, war; it is this that has infected the constitution with numberless diseases, that breaks in pieces the human frame, that tears asunder the bonds that attach so closely together the various

relations of life, that reduces the lovely form to putrefaction, that compels us to bury our dead out of our sight, “where they say to corruption, Thou art my father; and unto the worm, Thou art my mother and sister.” And do you—can you love sin? Can you serve a monster stained with the blood of every dear relation, and of all mankind? Can you roll that as a sweet morsel under your tongue, which is infinitely more poisonous than the gall of asps? If there was no other consideration to excite an abhorrence if sin, this is surely sufficient—that it “brought death into the world and all our woe.”

We are called together to learn what we are so prone to forget, that we are dying, and by an instance of mortality in another to be reminded of our own. We are all partakers of the same nature: we are all under the operation of the same sentence, “dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Death is the “way of *all* the earth:” the grave “the house appointed for *all* living.” In other wars there are exemptions, there are dismissions, but in this “there is no discharge.” The solemnities and services that we see attending our neighbours, friends and relations will be required for us:—will be required *certainly*; and will be required *soon*. “For what is our life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” “Our days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle.” Every image that

art and nature can supply is employed in the scriptures to hold forth the brevity of our duration upon earth : but no language can express, no imagination can conceive the importance attached to the termination of it. And yet it is as true as it is astonishing—that the principal care of thousands is only to keep this most interesting of all subjects from their thoughts ! But if there are any such deluded creatures hearing me this morning, let me remind you—that shutting your eyes against danger is not providing for your security : that your putting the evil day far off is not putting it away ; that your forgetfulness of the event does not even retard its approach.—While I speak, you die. Every breath you draw, every pulse you beat, brings you nearer the hour that will demonstrate the insufficiency of the world to succour you, and lay open to your view those states of immortal existence that await you beyond the grave. And can you deem it improper or needless to realize this truth, and make this awful fact the subject of serious reflection ? Would it not be reasonable and useful to say individually to yourselves—“ Suppose my body was nailed up in this coffin, in what region, and with what associates would my soul now be found ? Should I be joined to the spirits of just men made perfect, or have my portion with the devil and his angels ? ” Would it not be pious, would it not be blessed to pray, “ Make me to know

my end and the measure of my days what it is, that I may know how frail I am. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom?"

We are come hither to inquire what can prepare us to meet the king of terrors, and make us more than conquerors over the last enemy that is to be destroyed. And here, by every thing that is awful and interesting, let me beseech you to guard not only against indifference, but against mistake. For there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but it ends in the most dreadful disappointment. The consequences of delusion are remediless; the possibility of it is obvious; the frequency of it is certain. There are many whose hope is as the spider's web—curiously wrought, but easily destroyed. Search the scriptures therefore, and pray that the Spirit of God may lead you into all truth. You will then be directed to HIM, in whom our absent friend alone trusted, and in whom he found "righteousness and strength:" to HIM, who presents himself to us under every form of kindness and love, and cries, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:" to HIM, who even among these desolations and triumphs of mortality appears, "the resurrection and the life," and promises, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liv-

eth and believeth in me shall never die.”—Believest thou this?—Are you convinced that he is the only foundation on which a sinner can build with safety? That he is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him? That he once suffered for sins the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God? That he is our peace; and that by his stripes we are healed? Have you ever addressed him in the language of Peter, “Lord, save or I perish?” Have you ever committed your eternal concerns into his hand, knowing in whom you have believed? Is the life that you now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who loved you and gave himself for you? Is he every thing *to* you, and is he every thing *with* you? Is the same mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus? Does the same blood that speaks peace to your troubled consciences purify them also from dead works to serve the living and true God?—Such a man is prepared for life with all its events; for death with all its importance. Let him die *how* he will—*where* he will—*when* he will; to die is gain. The consequences of death being so tremendous, and the uncertainty of life being so manifestly great, no man, while unfit to leave this world, can possibly enjoy any happiness, but from ignorance or diversion: the moment he reflects, his peace and pleasure melt away. But what a source of tranquillity

and satisfaction has he, who possesses a good hope through grace that he is “accepted in the beloved;” that he has “redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins;” that “God has given to him the earnest of the spirit:”—who knows that while “the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolving, he has a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:”—who can say, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me”—“I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.” This man alone is worthy of our envy. “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

We are called hither to weep and mourn. It would argue a criminal insensibility if when the righteous perished no man laid it to heart. It would defeat the moral purposes of heaven in the dispensation. “By the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.” On such an occasion as this—

“Our grief becomes us and our tears are just.”

Not indeed with regard to the deceased. *He* is released, indulged, enriched, dignified, exceeding abundantly above all we could ask or think: and with subordinate propriety he could say to survivors with our Lord, “If ye loved me ye would

rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father." But his gain is our loss. We lose by his removal a benefactor, a defender, an advocate, an example: and when we look, and see reason weeping, mercy weeping, truth weeping, religion weeping, can we avoid the sympathy, and refuse to weep too?—As such men, such christians, such ministers withdraw, what a melancholy hue they cast around—how they impoverish our world—how they come "over us like clouds to cool our brain less arduous"—how they wean us

From these low grounds where sorrows grow
And every pleasure dies.

—How they allure us upwards and induce us to say with Thomas, "Let us go away, that we may die with him."

We are called hither to pay the last token of respect to the revered remains now lying before us. What though these eyes that once beamed intelligence are closed in darkness; what though these lips are silent that once proclaimed the Saviour's love; what though this body be now deserted of its immortal inhabitant and is reduced to a senseless clod—yet it is not to be despised—it *was* the workmanship of God—it *was* the temple of the Holy Ghost—it *did* accompany the soul in every trial and duty—it *is* the Redeemer's purchase—it *shall* be "changed and fashioned like his

own glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”—In the belief of this truth we commit this precious seed to the dust.—

Here the corpse was laid in the grave.

—“It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

And now, servant of God, farewell. We turn away from the tomb to mingle with thy spirit, and to transcribe the excellencies of thy life into our own. We hail thee. Thy warfare is accomplished. Thy tears are wiped away. Thou hast reached him who was the end of thy conversation, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." We rejoice that no man has taken thy crown. We rejoice that thou hast left a profession unstained by error or by vice. We rejoice that we have nothing to conceal, nothing to extenuate when thy name, mentioned in public or in private, awakens the attentions it deserves.—Thy dying pillow was not perplexed with those anxious forebodings that have tried the faith of many: the

objects of thy regard are amply enriched by the bounty of providence, and are disposed to honour the Lord with their substance. The wife of thy bosom is following hard after thee : and the son of her womb, and the son of her vows is resolving, at thy hallowed grave, that she shall not travel alone—her people shall be his people, and her God his God. Thine eyes have seen the good of Jerusalem ; a numerous church undivided and peaceful, blessed with a pastor after thine own heart, “ who shall feed them with knowledge and understanding ; ” and who, though “ young and tender,” is looking to that grace that is sufficient for him.

Our separation is only temporary ; a time of re-union is hastening on. Farewel, Farewel.—We shall soon meet thee in that world where the sound will be heard no more.

FINIS.

